

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant's undersigned representative would like to thank the Examiner for granting the interview conducted on April 8, 2004. As discussed in the interview, Applicant considers the claims to be distinguished from the prior art on the basis of the "identification information" as set forth in the claims. A more detailed explanation of this distinction is provided below.

In accordance with the Examiner's suggestion, the application has been amended to add section headings where appropriate.

The Examiner has required a new title that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed. The title has been amended herein to read "HEARING DEVICE HAVING SELF-CONTAINED, SELF-IDENTIFYING PERIPHERAL HARDWARE UNITS."

Further, claim 12 has been amended to clarify the language "self-contained peripheral hardware units" making it clear that they are separate from or "peripheral to" the digital signal processing unit. The scope of claim 12 has not been changed by the clarification. Further, this amendment is not being solely relied upon to distinguish claim 12 from the prior art, as explained below. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the amendment be entered for the purpose of expediting the prosecution of the present application.

Claims 12-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) to Weinfurter. For the following reasons, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Regarding amended claim 12, Weinfurter does not teach providing "an identification unit in at least one of said peripheral self-contained hardware units, the identification unit having an output and containing identification information identifying said hardware unit," as required. The Examiner cited the memory (18) and the intermediate memories (32) of Weinfurter as the identification unit. In the present application, "identification information" is provided in order

to allow the hearing device to determine what types of peripherals are connected (see page 5, lines 10-17). Examples of types of peripherals which can be connected to the hearing device include microphones, acoustic/electric transducers, control units, remote controls, program switches, a loudspeaker volume adjustment, etc. (see page 4, lines 6-12). Thus, in the case of a control unit being connected to the hearing device, an identification unit included in the control unit would contain identification information that would allow the hearing device to determine that a control unit is connected. Likewise, if a microphone is connected, an identification unit included in the microphone would contain identification information that would allow the hearing device to determine that a microphone is connected. As explained in more detail below, the memories (32) of Weinfurter store configuration information, but not identification information.

With reference to column 8, lines 23-59 and Fig. 12 of Weinfurter, there are provided calculating modules 30 with intermediate memories 32. Considering one of the calculating modules 30, there is allocated a memory module 34 which has a configuration input 36. Each of the six calculation modules 30 corresponds to one of the sub-function types 50, 52, 54, 56, 58 and 60. The first calculation module 30 receives sharp input values at input 24, the last calculation module 30 outputs the calculated sharp event values at output 26. Intermediate results, according to the sub-functions performed in the respective calculation modules, are transferred between the calculation modules 30 via intermediate memories 32.

Internal intermediate results (obviously at each calculation module 30) can be stored in the memory module 34. Each memory module 34 can contain *configuration information* which is executed in the respective calculation module. When the first calculation module 30 performs sub-function type 50 the respective memory 34 may contain configuration information for such

sub-function. When memory 34 contains such configuration information for a sub-function which is executed in calculation module 30, then such configuration information will in fact be information on how the sub-function shall be executed in calculation module 30 and *by no means will such configuration information, contained in memory 34, identify the type of memory module 34 as provided.*

Further, Weinfurter states that the configuration information can e.g. be the membership function of the input variable in the first calculation module 30 that receives the input signal 24, which in fact is generically interpreted as such configuration information defining how calculation module 30 shall treat signals applied to input 24. The memory modules 34 can be defined from the outside via the configuration input 36 for the configuration of the fuzzy logic functions of the calculation means 20. Considering the entire context, this means that the "configuration information", which is contained in memory 34 and which is transferred to calculation module 30 for configuring the respective sub-function to be performed, is input to the memory module 34 via configuration input 36. *Again, no self-identification of a hardware module is addressed.*

Thus, it is important to note that this disclosure teaches to provide in a calculation unit for a function to be performed to provide in a memory unit configuration information for such function or algorithm and that the algorithm or function performed in the calculation unit is configured e.g. parameterized by the information contained in the memory module 34. There is not a word about identification. The configuration information does not provide identification, and therefore cannot be considered identification information.

For all of the above reasons, Weinfurter does not teach every limitation of claim 12, as required. Therefore, claim 12 and its dependent claims 13-23 are patentable over the prior art

of record.

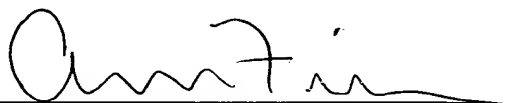
Regarding claim 24, Weinfurtner does not teach "automatically identifying said peripheral self-contained hardware unit," as required. As explained about with reference to claim 12, Weinfurtner does not teach that modules can be identified by the hearing device to which they are connected. Therefore, since every limitation of claim 24 is not taught by Weinfurtner as required, claim 24 and its dependent claims 25-27 are patentable over the prior art of record.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 32794US1.

Respectfully submitted,

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